

IN THE CLAIMS

Amend the claims as follows.

Claims 1-67 (Canceled).

68. (Currently Amended) The A recombinant vaccinia virus vector according to claim 67, comprising a vector sequence, a promotor selected from the group consisting of a prokaryotic promoter, a eukaryotic promoter and a viral promoter, said promoter being operatively linked to a nucleic sequence to allow expression of an HCV single or specifically oligomerized E1 envelope viral protein, with said nucleotide sequence being characterised further in that it encodes a single HCV E1 protein starting in the region between amino acid positions 117 and 192 ~~1 and 192~~ and ending in the region between amino acid positions 250 and 400 ~~400~~, more particularly ending in the region between positions 250 and 341, even more preferably ending in the region between position 290 and 341

E1 + E2

69. (Currently Amended) The recombinant vector according to claim 68, comprising a vector sequence, a promotor selected from the group consisting of a prokaryotic promoter, a eukaryotic promoter and a viral promoter, said promoter being operatively linked to a nucleic sequence to allow expression of an HCV single or specifically oligomerized E1 envelope viral protein, with said nucleotide sequence being characterised further in that it encodes a single HCV E1 protein starting in the region between amino acid positions 117 and 192 and ending in the region between amino

acid positions 263 and 400, more particularly ending in the region between positions 290 and 326.

70. (Currently Amended) The A recombinant vector according to claim 68, comprising a vector sequence, a promotor selected from the group consisting of a prokaryotic promoter, a eukaryotic promoter and a viral promoter, said promoter being operatively linked to a nucleic sequence to allow expression of an HCV single or specifically oligomerized E1 envelope viral protein, with said nucleotide sequence being characterised further in that it encodes a single HCV E1 protein bearing a deletion of the first hydrophobic domain between positions 264 to 293, plus or minus 8 amino acids.

Claims 71-72 (Canceled).

73. (Currently Amended) The recombinant vector according to any one of claims 68-70, claim 67, with said nucleotide sequence further comprising operably linked a 5'-terminal ATG codon and a 3'-terminal stop codon.

74. (Currently Amended) The recombinant vector according to any one of claims 68-70 claim 67, with said nucleotide sequence being characterised further in that a factor Xa cleavage site and/or 3 to 10, preferably 6, histidine codons have been added 3'-terminally to the coding region.

Claim 75 (Canceled).

76. (Currently Amended) ~~The A recombinant vector according to claim 67,~~
~~further comprising a vector sequence, a promotor selected from the group consisting~~
~~of a prokaryotic promoter, a eukaryotic promoter and a viral promoter, said promoter~~
~~being operatively linked to a nucleic sequence to allow expression of an HCV single or~~
~~specifically oligomerized E1 envelope viral protein, said nucleotide sequence being~~
~~characterised further in that at least one of the glycosylation sites present in said E1 or~~
~~E2 protein has been removed at the nucleic acid level.~~

77. (Currently Amended) A vaccine composition comprising a recombinant
vector ~~comprising a vector sequence, a promotor selected from the group consisting of~~
~~a prokaryotic promoter, a eukaryotic promoter and a viral promoter, said promoter being~~
~~operatively linked to a nucleic sequence to allow expression of an HCV single or~~
~~specifically oligomerized E1 envelope viral protein according to claim 67.~~

Claim 78. (Canceled).

79. (Currently Amended) A composition comprising a recombinant vector
according to any one of claims 68-70, 76 and 95 ~~claim 67~~.

Claims 80-84 (Canceled).

85. (Currently Amended) A method for immunizing a human mammal comprising administering a composition of claim 79 to said mammal.

86.. (Previously Added) The composition according to claim 79, further comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable adjuvant.

87. (Currently Amended) The recombinant vector according to any one of claims 69-70, 76 and 95, claim 67, with said vector being characterized as a live recombinant vector.

88. (Currently Amended) The recombinant vector according to any one of claims 69-70, 76 and 95 claim 67, wherein said vector is a vaccinia virus vector.

89. (Currently Amended) The recombinant vector according to claim 67, any one of claims 69-70, 76 and 95 wherein said vector is avipox.

90. (Currently Amended) The recombinant vector according to claim 67, any one of claims 69-70, 76 and 95 wherein said vector is Ankara Modified Virus (AMV).

91. (Currently Amended) The recombinant vector according to claim 67, any one of claims 69-70, 76 and 95 wherein said vector is a baculovirus vector.

Claims 92-94 (Canceled).

95. (Previously Added) A recombinant vector comprising any of the sequences as represented by SEQ ID NOs: 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, or parts thereof.

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96. (Currently Amended) A recombinant vector of ~~claim 67~~ any one of claims 68-70, 76 and 77 wherein said nucleotide sequence is a nucleotide sequence represented by SEQ ID NOs: 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, or parts thereof.

97. (new) A recombinant vector of claim 69 wherein said nucleotide sequence is a nucleotide sequence represented by SEQ ID NOs: 7, 9, 11, 13, 23, 29, 31, or parts thereof.

98. (new) A vaccine composition comprising a recombinant vector of any of claims 68, 70, 76, 95 or 97.

99. (new) A method of immunizing a mammal comprising administering a vaccine composition of claim 77 to said mammal.

100. (new) A method of immunizing a mammal comprising administering a vaccine composition of claim 97 to said mammal.

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101. (new) The composition according to claim 77, further comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable adjuvant.